



UTM's award-winning college newspaper

the pacer

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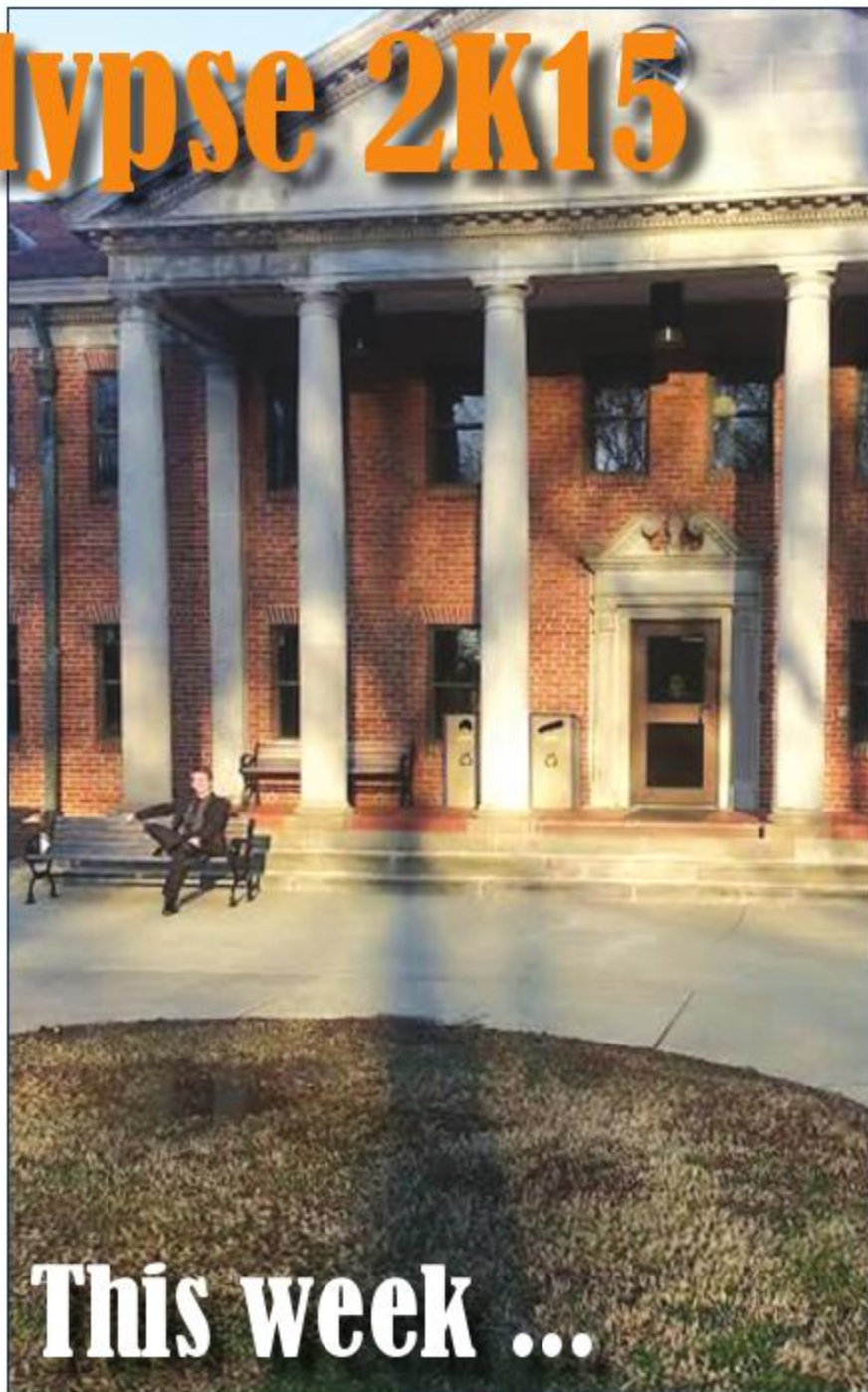
Independent voice of the University of Tennessee at Martin

Volume 87, Issue 13

Snowpocalypse 2K15



Last week ...



This week ...

Inside ...

- Snowpocalypse: Buried in snow
- 'Empire' becomes a TV favorite
- Iotas host 'Freak Show' for greek week
- Skyhawks no longer 16-0



The UTM Business Administration building, above, is pictured during the snowstorm last week and during the warm, sunny weather yesterday. Gooch Hall, at left, has one pile of unmelted, dirty snow sitting next to the trash can on the Quad side of the building. | Photo credits / Camille Hall and Tomi Parrish

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Views on Snowpocalypse

EDITORIAL

Learn how to handle any disaster that occurs

Instead of our usual Viewpoints section, we have blanketed you this week with photos and opinion articles about Snowpocalypse 2k15.

We're pretty sure you're all sick of the snow and ice so kindly dumped on us by winter storms Octavia and Thor, but we won't apologize for running this snow-covered issue, given the extent of the problems caused by the weather.

Our reasoning is simple – disasters happen, and we have to

be ready for them when they do.

For example, now that the snow and ice are pretty much gone, we've already had one flood warning for the area and are now under an areal flood watch because of the amount of rain expected today through Saturday. The ground is already saturated from the snowmelt, so all the rain we've gotten and will get has no place to go.

We're also coming up on typical tornado season in the Southeast, which encompasses

much of March through May. We also live fewer than 30 miles from an active fault line, the New Madrid fault line, which means we could, at any time, be subject to an earthquake disaster.

The point is that we have to be prepared as individuals for anything that life and Mother Nature throw at us. We can't, and shouldn't, merely rely on "officials," whether they're government or university leaders, to take care

of everything when a disaster strikes. We do agree with many of our writers, though, that the weeklong closing truly wreaked havoc on everyone associated with this campus.

For those who truly want to be ready for disasters, call upon your self-reliance and your initiative and start checking websites to find out how to become disaster-ready. We recommend sites sponsored by NOAA/National Weather Service, Department of Homeland Security, and our

own UTM Office of Public Safety.

Meanwhile, try to stay dry in the predicted downpours, get caught up on your class assignments, and learn how to best take care of yourself no matter what happens.

We do hope that some of you got to play in the snow and actually enjoyed it without being injured. And keep in mind our saying about our yucky weather: "Hey, at least we don't live in Boston."

COLUMN

Disaster preparedness: Are we ready?

Chance Farmer

Co-News Editor

It is important to realize that the university does have plans for various natural disasters such as tornadoes and earthquakes.

However, Winter Storm Octavia caused a Level-two State of Emergency in Tennessee, leaving damage across the state, including our campus.

The university was closed for a solid week, a record in itself, and still, students had major difficulties across campus once classes resumed. Compared to other natural disasters, Octavia dealt very minor damage, but it begs the question: will we be ready if and when something bigger hits?

When classes resumed on Feb. 23, several students reported injuries sustained on and off campus. Even before classes resumed, there were reports of leakages in dorms and apartments but there was little done to aid the situation. Granted, there wasn't much that could be done to prevent the icy sidewalks and parking



Photo credit / Camille Hall

lots, considering the rain that fell first would have melted any salt on the ground. Still, campus

was shut down for an entire week, and the sidewalks and parking lots still weren't cleared

when students went back to class.

As said earlier, the damage was relatively minor, but considering the way the situation was handled, one can't help but wonder if we are ready for a major disaster when that hits. Yes, we have emergency plans when these events do occur, but what good are these plans if we are so caught off guard by such a minor event as Octavia? If a major disaster, like a tornado or earthquake, were to hit our university, would the response be as slow and unorganized as it was with this storm?

If we have emergency plans for major natural disasters, why don't we have drills to simulate what we would do in such an event? Yes, everyone gets annoyed with having to do safety drills, and it does take time out of everyone's schedule, but being prepared for a major natural disaster would certainly be better for everyone rather than the mass panic and chaos that not being prepared when it does happen.

COLUMN

Closure woes include missed meals, dorm leaks

Amber Sherman

Staff Writer

During the week of Feb. 16, classes and administrative offices were closed for the entire week because of the snowstorm that blanketed the campus with over six inches of snow. During the closing, classes were canceled but certain campus facilities remained open such as the dining hall.

Students were given different times to go and retrieve meals at the dining hall, but what about students who couldn't make it to the dining hall, who fell and were injured? Ryan Martin, Director of Housing, said this information would

come from Sodexo, but that he doubts Sodexo would reimburse students for meals they missed. He also stated there are no protocols in places to help students get food in disasters of this sort, and that it's students' personal responsibility.

Martin stated, "The University opened the Dining Hall during the recent snow and ice event on campus to service our students. It appeared that most students were able to get to the University Center to eat if they wanted to while I was there."

Freshman English major, Brittany Reynolds tells a different story stating, "It was a disaster getting to the dining hall almost everyday."

Another issue that arises

from the storm was the issue of dorm leaks. On the issue, Ryan Martin stated, "Many properties on and off campus experienced some leaks due to the larger than normal ice accumulations on the roofs followed by several inches of rain. We encourage all residents to get renters insurance or see if they are covered under their families existing policies. The University cannot directly reimburse for claimed property damage but there is a process in place to request reimbursement from Knoxville. In the event of leaks, our staff will assist our residents with clean up of water. Physical Plant will then work towards repairing the leaks."

The leaks have since been repaired and taken care of,

but how many students were notified of the protocol to reimburse them for damaged belongings, or that students are expected to be covered under their parents insurance or purchase renters insurance?

I for one didn't know I was expected to be covered under my parent's insurance. I believe students should be notified of these types of issues, and most likely through an email and not paper that will eventually be thrown away.

Students who need more information on the reimbursement process should contact Ryan Martin at (731)332-9117 or by email at rmartin@utm.edu

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Views on Snowpocalypse

COLUMN

Was UTM really ready when classes resumed?

Emily Stewart

Staff Writer

Class was back in session for UTM Monday, February 23, after a week-long break of school due to large amounts of ice and snow.

UTM groundskeepers were able to spread salt along major walkways and entrances before the inch of ice took over early Monday, Feb. 16. However, after several inches of snow accumulated and temperatures dropped below freezing, sometimes into the teens and single digits, the salt did not have much of an effect. Therefore, UTM students received notification each day for the school week of February 16 through 20 saying school would not occur the following day.

Monday, February 23, UTM was back in session, despite the inch of ice still hazardingly coating the majority of the campus sidewalks. Work crews had worked the previous two days clearing the snow from the university's parking lots and

sidewalks but by doing this they took away what little traction students could rely on walking to class the majority of that week.

The university parking lots for students were still a horrendous mess. Snow was piled as high as the stop signs, and ice still covered the parking lots and campus sidewalks. Was UTM's campus truly safe for students and faculty to reopen on February 23?

Weakley County Schools were still closed Feb. 23 through 27, despite being closed the previous week of Feb. 16 through 20. Dyer County Schools were still inoperable as well the week of Feb. 23 through 27.

Dyersburg State Community College and the University of Memphis reopened on Monday, Feb. 23, like UTM. However, much of the ice and snow had been washed away by the rain the area received late the previous Saturday.

Asha Burks, freshman Health and Human Performance major at the University of Memphis, reported a relative lack of ice in comparison to other areas

thanks to the rain as well as to the warmer temperatures in the area.

"The campus was icy, but only in the parts that were shallow," said Burks.

Chabeli Brooks, freshman Business Management major at the University of Memphis, was affected by the cold weather.

"The top three floors [in the campus parking garage] were covered in ice, so we couldn't use half of the garage," said Brooks. Brooks also said that students were redirected to parking spots with less amounts of ice.

"I know the bridges down here," said Memphis resident Daniel Hoffman in an interview with local news station WREG. "I got out this morning, and they were — they had ice and snow on them, but the sand and the stuff they put on them seemed to really help."

Dyersburg State Community College's parking lots were still covered with ice as well in some spots, but not completely coated like UTM's campus.

"Right now, we are expecting some minor flooding of the Forked Deer River but



Pacer Graphic/Jami Miller

there doesn't seem to be an immediate danger to businesses or local residents in the area," said Dyersburg Emergency Operations Manager Mark Grant on February 22.

The University of Memphis and Dyersburg State Community College had less ice on the last week of February

and were semi-safe to operate the week of Feb. 23 through Feb. 27. But, with Weakley County Schools still not open the last week of February and some of Martin small businesses still closed at that point, was UTM truly ready and safe to be fully operational on the 23rd?

COLUMN

Shouldn't all classes halt when campus is closed?

Chance Farmer

Co-News Editor

Winter Storm Octavia has definitely put everyone behind schedule, professors and students alike.

We all have deadlines to reach and it didn't help at all that the campus was closed for an entire week.

However, some teachers, in an attempt to keep on-schedule, resorted to posting assignments on Blackboard for students to complete throughout the week. It's a good idea, provided that everyone has access to the Internet. But the thing is, not everyone has access when campus is closed. The only

access to the Internet some students have is on campus, so how can they be expected to complete their assignments without the proper tools necessary to complete them? That's like handing out a test, but instead of handing out the whole thing, you only hand out the scan card. Sure, the simple answer is for the student to contact the professor as soon as possible and hope to work something out. Even then, how can professors expect students to do any class work when all classes are cancelled and the university is shut down?

If the assignment is to be given online, it should be made sure that each and every student

has equal access to the Internet.

To play devil's advocate, this semester is going by extremely fast and professors have deadlines to meet just as students do. If one week of classes is cancelled out of a 14-week semester, that's actually quite a bit of material that either can't be covered or that will have to be crammed into the remainder of the semester. How are they supposed to decide what isn't as important as the rest of the material? In a way, the quality of our education would be compromised by not covering all the material because we aren't getting the full range of what would normally be covered.



Photo Credits/Camille Hall



Views of Snowpocalypse

Not just a day off: instructors affected by campus closings

Justin Glover

News Co-Editor

Winter weather can be just as hazardous to learning as it is to safety.

While many students may see snow as an excuse to spend a day relaxing at home instead of going to class, winter weather is often a severe inconvenience for professors and instructors. Instructors usually plan out their curriculum for the semester well in advance, with some lead room depending on whether their class is advancing rapidly or needs extra time on a given topic. However, missing even one class can potentially disrupt those plans, requiring the instructor to act quickly in order to develop a workable contingency plan.

This spring, as a result of the administrative decision

to cancel all classes during the week of Feb. 16, many instructors are being forced to drop portions or even entire sections of their planned material from the curriculum. Dr. Ian Cleary, a professor of biology at UTM, is one professor whose courses will be adversely affected by the decision.

"Losing a week [of classes] is difficult," said Dr. Cleary. "That's a lot of material, so it's quite possible that I'm not going to cover as much material as I had originally planned."

This semester, Dr. Cleary is teaching Biology 110 and 140, the subject's introductory courses. Biology 140 is designed for Biology majors, while Biology 110 is for non-Biology majors. Both classes focus on the biology and function of cells. Dr. Cleary

says that covering the amount of material he had planned in a shorter period of time is a challenging prospect.

"You can't simply go faster," said Dr. Cleary. "I can't talk faster during the lecture to make up time; that's not feasible. So it's more, 'Can I tweak things? Can I change how I'm presenting the material so that we can cover the essentials?'"

These issues are not unique to professors of the sciences. Many instructors around campus have been subject to the disruptions caused by the onslaught of hazardous weather.

"You have to look at omitting things," said Dr. Cleary. "But also, you have to look at exam schedules and assignments. Can some of those be pushed back? Sure, but there are limits to that."



Photo credit / Maegan Jolley

Some UTM students affected more deeply by winter weather

Lyndsey Hayslett

Managing Editor

When the administration for UTM makes its decisions to close campus, we would all like to assume that those decisions are made with every student's best interests in mind.

Well, we all know where assumptions can get us. When our campus was closed for an entire school week because of snow and ice, it was probably in the best interests of everyone that lives, works or attends school on our campus.

When the campus decided to resume operation on the following Monday, however, was every student really considered? This is not a rhetorical question. When we returned to campus on Monday, Feb. 23, our facilities and grounds were not ready for all of the many types of students that UTM is so very fortunate to call learners of its institution.

UTM prides itself on being located in a rural area. Many of our students commute everyday from these small rural towns that aren't very far from Martin.

Rural roads aren't usually under the care of state maintenance. So, while the powers that be deemed our campus "safe enough" to resume classes, most rural roads were still impassable on Feb. 23.

Law requires UTM to accommodate students with disabilities. Well, I saw firsthand many disabled students struggling to navigate through our treacherous campus. Maintenance did a terrible job of making sure sidewalks were clear and safe for all students, especially those

who already have a difficult time getting around when there's not a natural disaster. I should also include those students who may be expecting. It's bad enough when one person is injured, but it's even worse when a mother and her unborn child are injured because our administration made a bad judgment call.

Finally, there are those students that live on campus that were stuck without access to things they needed to keep them feeling safe and secure during the snowstorm.

It is the responsibility of the administrators of this university to see to that every student that attends this university is safe. No one should feel as if they need to risk their safety in order to get to class. The thing that makes this university wonderful is the sense of pride that's everywhere in the atmosphere. As students, we should never be ashamed that our educational institution would risk the safety of students in order to push a larger agenda.



Photo credit / Maegan Jolley

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News

UTM students prepare for Kyrgyzstan travel-study

Mark Maloney

Guest Writer

This summer, seven UT Martin students will be proving their commitment to expanding their horizons toward a global outlook by traveling to the other side of the world.

The landlocked country of Kyrgyzstan, situated between Russia and China, is their destination. While this alone makes Kyrgyzstan an ideal location to study, there are numerous other reasons why College of Business and Global Affairs assistant professor, Dr. Kevin Long, the trip's advisor, has chosen it as the focus of the study.

Having spent the summer of 2014 in Kyrgyzstan to begin the process of arranging the

trip, Dr. Long came back with a great appreciation of its culture. He explains that it is a very affordable destination with a warm and welcoming culture. Thanks to these factors, the students will be able to stay and study within the capital of Bishkek.

"This trip allows students to experience an entirely new culture without the cost that is normally associated with it. Most capital cities carry with them an extreme financial burden, but Bishkek is extremely affordable," said Dr. Long. "Combining that with the culture and regional significance makes it a great destination for what we're aiming to achieve," Long explained.

Thomas "Cole" Champion, a senior earning BAs in both

Spanish and international studies with a concentration on business and economic development, is especially excited for the trip to be taking place.

"I have been interested in this trip for a while," Champion explained. "Three years ago Professor Long and I had discussed making a trip to Kyrgyzstan. I am ecstatic that this has come to fruition."

Though nothing is yet set in stone, Dr. Long hopes that the trip will be offered periodically in the coming years. He explains that even countries that are fairly unknown to the general public play a role in global economics and culture, as his seven students are soon to learn, and hopes to continue proving that to future UTM students.



Several UTM students will embark this summer on a travel-study trip to Kyrgyzstan (highlighted in green on this map of central Asia). | **Graphic Credit/ Wikimedia Commons**

Faculty Spotlight: Dr. Kevin Long

Mark Maloney

Guest Writer

Though his alma mater pride in the University of Kentucky still shines brightly during basketball season, Dr. Kevin Long is happy to find himself teaching business law at the University of Tennessee at Martin.

Having graduated from law school at Washington University in St. Louis, Dr. Long practiced in varying capacities before finding his way to the classroom. Such a background seems to have made him a perfect fit for teaching the business leaders of the future how to save themselves from potential problems.

"Helping people to think ahead—to be proactive towards problems rather than reactive—I know the importance of that," Long explained. "I know first-hand that when you have to call a lawyer, to at least a certain degree, you've already lost."

Now entering his fourth year at UT Martin, Dr. Long expresses his eagerness at having the chance to interact with students. As someone who genuinely enjoys meeting new people, Long feels that being a professor allows for great opportunities to do so. Those interactions, he says, are what set UTM apart.

"This campus as a whole has a student body that is eager to come to college, one that knew this is where they wanted to be for one reason or another. Ultimately, I have the chance to meet and talk to various people, keep those relationships even years down the road and encounter even more new faces in four more months."

Long's fluency in both Portuguese and Russian show that experiencing the world's cultures is a big part of his life. As such, he is glad to be beginning a new program for students to learn of totally foreign parts of the world.



Dr. Kevin Long

This summer, Dr. Long will be leading a group of students to Kyrgyzstan. Impressing how important he finds such experiences to be, Long is hoping to expose students to not only the business importance that such a country plays but to the significance of learning of and interacting with new cultures. Though he is not yet concerned about the legacy that such a trip will leave for him at UT Martin, Long is hoping that it will become a periodic occurrence for future students. As for himself, Long knows that he will continue to travel to the region as frequently as possible, citing the affordability compared to other destinations and, more importantly, the friendliness of the people.

While he may spend his lecture hours preaching the importance of business contracts and other aspects of law, Long feels that a key component of education is also worldly experience. While there are many things that a classroom education can bring and many opportunities it can create, Long hopes to continue steering students toward the parts of the world they may never see otherwise and the vastly different experiences they will find there.



Representatives from UTM attended the Southeast Journalism Conference convention Feb. 26-28 at Georgia State University in Atlanta. From left: Ashleigh Burton, Dr. Richard Robinson, Toshiya Leonard, Chance Farmer, Justin Glover, Lyndsey Hayslett, Blake Stevens. | **Pacer Photo/Chance Farmer**

Pacer, WUTM win regional awards

Chance Farmer

News Co-Editor

UTM's student newspaper, The Pacer, and college radio station, WUTM 90.3 FM "The Hawk," continued their tradition of bringing home awards from the annual Southeast Journalism Conference (SEJC) convention, held this year at Georgia State University in the heart of downtown Atlanta.

WUTM, for the fourth time in its history, placed first as the Best College Radio Station in the Southeast in the annual "Best of the South" competition. The Pacer tied for second in Best College Website, the third time the paper has been recognized for its online work, and also broke into the Top 10 again for Best College Newspaper.

WUTM faculty adviser Dr. Richard Robinson and staff members from both media outlets attended the 29th annual convention, held Feb. 26-28. The students — Ashleigh Burton, Blake Stevens and Toshiya Leonard from WUTM, and Chance Farmer, Lyndsey Hayslett, Justin Glover

and Sheila Scott from The Pacer — participated in on-site competitions in Atlanta, with categories ranging from News Anchoring and Radio News Reporting to Public Relations and Feature Writing.

In addition to the on-site competitions, students were invited to attend panels on subjects that journalists would find important, such as the Ebola outbreak and the Ferguson, Missouri, riots. These panels were held by leading members in the field of journalism, such as Caleb Hennerman, documentary producer for CNN, and Ralitsa Vassileva, CNN news anchor and correspondent of over 20 years.

The Pacer awards are:
Best College Newspaper, ranked eighth (tie)
Best College Website, ranked second (tie)
Best College Magazine, ranked eighth
Best News-Editorial Artist/Illustrator - Joey Plunk, ranked second
Best Feature Writer - Sheila Scott, ranked third (tie)

Best Newspaper Page Layout Designer - Ashley Marshall, ranked ninth

WUTM awards are:
Best College Radio Station, ranked first

Best College Audio News Program, ranked second

Best Radio News Feature Reporter - Sydney LaFreniere, ranked fifth

Best Radio Hard News Reporter - Tori Seng, ranked second

Best Radio Journalist - Blake Stevens, ranked sixth

In the on-site competition, Ashleigh Burton placed first in Radio News Reporting and Blake Stevens placed second in TV Anchoring. Overall, UTM tied for eighth in On-site Championship Team.

SEJC is composed of about 40 schools from seven Southeastern states. UTM was host to the annual convention in February 2012, and has been an active member of SEJC since 2001. The 2016 convention will be held at Austin Peay State University in Clarksville, Tennessee.

News

Oklahoma students expelled after acts of racism

Chance Farmer
News Co-Editor

University of Oklahoma President, David Boren, made the decision Tuesday, Mar. 9 to expel two students.

These students are members of the Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity and had been seen in a video singing a racist chant.

Boren says the university has a "zero tolerance" policy for such "threatening racist behavior," according to CNN.

This decision came two days after the video surfaced and only hours after Boren told CNN that he would suspend or expel the ringleaders if at all possible.

Both the university and SAE national headquarters also decided to shutter the Oklahoma chapter. Following this decision, the Greek letters were removed from the fraternity house, the house was closed as of midnight Tuesday and the windows were boarded up.

According to Boren, individual punishments could be a bit trickier.

"Well, legally, our concern is we have to demonstrate exactly how the educational experience of our students was threatened by their actions," Boren said. "And it really has to focus on the students on the bus. Did the other students on the bus have their educational



Workers take down the Greek letters on the front of the former Sigma Alpha Epsilon house at Oklahoma University. | Photo Credit/ Associated Press

experiences disrupted?"

The video itself was only nine seconds long, but the controversy it has caused is enormous. The video depicts party-bound students on a bus chanting, "There will never be a n**** SAE. You can hang him from a tree, but he'll never sign with me. There will never be a n**** SAE." After the university's school newspaper and the campus organization Unheard received the clip via anonymous sources and transmitted it, both the university

and SAE national headquarters acted swiftly to shutter the SAE house in Norman.

SAE National President Brad Cohen said, "I was not only shocked and disappointed but disgusted at the outright display of racism displayed in the video. SAE is a diverse organization, and we have zero tolerance of any bad behavior."

Joseph Nelson, senior Sociology major and member of Sigma Alpha Epsilon Fraternity at UTM,

said that he was not altogether surprised by the video.

"When I saw the video, I didn't flinch, not one bit," said Nelson. "What I mean by that [is], it doesn't shock me to see that racism is still alive in 2015. What's crazy about it is that people do not want to talk about social problems. The only way to solve racial issues is talk about it and not run from it. As an African American I respect the word 'diverse', but when you have a group of people like that running around, how can a person respect that word?"

Angelica Butler, president of Alpha Kappa Sorority at UTM, said that the incident reflects poorly on the fraternity as a whole.

"I can say a lot about that distasteful video that went viral in a matter of days," said Butler. "The members not only publicly humiliated [themselves] but their entire fraternity. It is a shame that the fraternity will be branded with this senseless act forever. This simply shows that racism still continues to exist in today's world, and people are not ashamed to hide it. However, I commend the students at the the University of Oklahoma for coming together to stand for something so meaningful. The unity the student body is displaying is wonderful in spite of the circumstances."

Preview: Women's Studies Symposium, EqualiTEA

Chance Farmer
News Co-Editor

The fourth annual Women's Studies Symposium, sponsored by the UTM Women's Center, will be held at Watkins Auditorium on Thursday, Mar. 24.

The event will begin at 1 p.m. with a motivational keynote address by Dr. Victoria Seng on the subject of breast cancer awareness.

Following the keynote address, there will be two breakout sessions beginning at 2 p.m. and 3 p.m.

These sessions include presentations such as: Interviewing and Presenting Yourself Professionally, Adopting Healthy Behaviors and Increasing the Likelihood They will Stick, Creating a Democratic Community: Jane Addams and Hull House, Look Who's Talking: Gender Interactions, Do You Hear What I Hear: A Discussion of Schizophrenia and other Psychotic Disorders, AAUW's Point/ Counter Point: Discussing Women's Issues, Want to be a Top Candidate: Marketing Yourself, and Women's Self-defense: Don't Be Afraid to Fight Back (For Women Only).

Following the Symposium, the fifth annual EqualiTEA will be held in the Boling University Center at 4 p.m. Dr. Teresa Collard and Dr. Lisa Lebleu will present Febb Burn and Suffrage Song: A Fictionalized Historical Performance. The event will be free to UTM students, faculty, and staff, and will be \$10 to community members who attend the tea.

The registration deadline for both events is Thursday, Mar. 19. The registration for the Women's Studies Symposium is limited to 150 participants, while registration for EqualiTEA is limited to only 100 participants. Any student is encouraged to attend the events.

For more information about registration, contact the Women's Center at womenscenter@utm.edu or tcollard@utm.edu.

Congress in chaos over Iran controversy

Chance Farmer
News Co-Editor

As the Obama administration continues to negotiate with the Iranian government concerning Iran's nuclear program, 47 Republican senators sent a letter to Iranian leaders saying that any deal made with President Obama may not last.

The letter, on which almost every Republican senator collaborated, warns Iranian leadership and the White House that they may not understand how the U.S. congressional system works, and that any deal not ratified by Congress is simply an executive agreement that can be revoked by the next president "with the stroke of a pen."

The president denounced those who penned the letter, claiming the group was aligning themselves with Iranian "hard-liners."

"I think it's somewhat ironic to see some members



Sen. Tom Cotton (R-Arkansas), one of the 47 Republican senators responsible for drafting an open letter to the Iranian government. | Photo Credit/ Associated Press

of Congress wanting to make common cause with the hard-liners in Iran," said President Obama. "It's an unusual coalition. I think what we're going to focus on now is actually seeing if we're going to

get a deal or not. Once we do, if we do, we'll be able to make a case to the American people, and I'm confident we'll be able to implement it."

Democrats, as well as a top Iranian negotiator,

also condemned the letter, calling it a purposeful attempt to undermine the delicate negotiations as they reach a pivotal deadline later this month, according to CNN. Former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton weighed in, saying that Republicans were either trying to help Iranians or hurt President Obama.

Vice President Joe Biden also spoke out, saying in a statement that the letter is "expressly designed to undercut a sitting president in the midst of sensitive international negotiations" and "beneath the dignity of an institution I revere."

"This letter sends a highly misleading signal to friend and foe alike that our Commander-In-Chief cannot deliver on America's commitments - a message that is as false as it is dangerous," Biden said.

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Arts & Entertainment

Welcome to 'Freak Show;' Iota week begins

Amber Sherman
Staff Writer

The unpredictable Eta Pi Chapter of Iota Phi Theta Fraternity Inc. was founded on July 23, 2010, on the UTM campus.

The charter members of the Eta Pi chapter are Kevin Newhouse, Chris Redden, Marcus Terry, Jern Tharpe, Justin Brewster, Harold Johnson, Frank Lewis

and Jerry Patrick.

The fraternity's goals are to strive for the advancement of scholarship, leadership, citizenship, fidelity and brotherhood. They aim to continue to use all of their resources to set a positive example for the campus, and use their leadership and citizenship to improve not only the campus, but the community as well.

Iota Phi Theta's mission is, "The

Development and Perpetuation of Scholarship, Leadership, Citizenship, Fidelity, and Brotherhood among men." The fraternity's official colors are charcoal brown and gilded gold. Their official philanthropy is the Lupus Foundation of America. They have over 249 chapters and 30,000 members nationwide.

Their theme for this year's Greek Week is "The Freak Show," based on the famous

"American Horror Story" television series.

The events began Tuesday, March 10, with "Freak 101, Sex Jeopardy," and continued Wednesday, March 11, in the UC Ballroom with "A Night at the Carnival." The main event is the "Password Game" made popular by a freak-show artist.

Thursday, March 12, is the Freak-Sync, a play off the popular singing show the

"Singing Bee". This is also a free event that will be in the UC Ballroom at 6:55 p.m.

Friday, March 13, is the 2015 NPHC Greek Stroll Off. Pre-sale tickets are \$3, with the cost rising to \$5 at the door. The event takes place at the Student Life Center at 6:55 p.m. Also, at 9 p.m., is an Iota Phi Theta Informative in the Gooch Auditorium; professional attire is required.

New members continue Alphas' legacy at UTM

Jeremy Smith
A&E Editor

The Tau Psi chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc. presented its spring 2015 initiation class to the UTM campus on Feb. 28.

The Tau Psi chapter was chartered at UTM in 2009 by 14 young men. The new pledge class marks the six-year anniversary of the chapter's presence at UTM and the eighth line Tau Psi has presented to the campus.

The Neophyte Showcase began at 7:06 p.m. in Watkins Auditorium located in the University Center.

The seven new members performed a traditional probate script by reciting greetings, chapter and organization history, poems, stepping and individualized probate raps to unveil themselves to the campus as Alpha men.

Steven Douglass, a Fall 2013

initiate of the Tau Psi chapter, was the Dean of Pledges for the seven new brothers.

"As I sat there watching the show, I knew in my heart that the immortal Tau Psi chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha has been left in the hands of great men.

"The dynasty of Tau Psi will continue with Ra's R.E.I.G.N.," said Douglass, a Senior accounting and finance major.

The seven new Alphas on UTM's yard are Thierry Vester, Terrance Nichols, Kameron Echols, Jordan Brown, Jason Andrews, Emilio Walls, and Dennis Alexander, now known in their chapter's history as Ra's R.E.I.G.N.

"It was an experience I'll never forget and I'm glad I got to experience it with those that matter.

"Life is a business and is most exciting when it is lived for others, especially the men I call my brothers," said new member



The Tau Psi Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha's new members, or Ra's R.E.I.G.N., are Kameron Echols, Dennis Alexander, Emilio Walls, Jason Andrews, Jordan Brown, Thierry Vester and Terrance Nichols. | Photo Credit/Anthony Prewitt

Emilio Walls, a sophomore Biology major.

Up next for the neophytes is the 84th Southern Region

Convention located in Orlando, Florida, March 19-22.

For information on upcoming events and service projects for

the Tau Psi chapter, you can stay up to date through UTM's Orgsync and their social media accounts at @TauPsiAlphas.

TV's most talked-about show 'Empire'

Barriana Woods
Assistant A&E Editor

Fox phenom "Empire" has caused a huge stir in the entertainment industry as viewer ratings increase.

The popular soap opera and musical television show first premiered January 7, 2015, with 9.9 million viewers. The show viewer ratings have increased over the eight weeks it's been on the air, each time with up to 1.5 million more viewers than the week before. The show is up to 14.6 million viewers and has fans and critics going wild.

The hourlong drama is produced by Lee Daniels and Danny Strong and stars Terrance Howard, Lucious Lyon and Taraji P. Henson, who plays



Photo Credit/www.fox.com/empire

Cookie. While many viewers thought of the show being a spin-off of the movie "Hustle and Flow," some hip-hop artists seem to think otherwise.

Hip-hop mogul Sean "Diddy" Combs is coming for directors with a lawsuit, claiming that the show mirrors the story of

his life for the lead character Lucious Lyon, according to All Hip-Hop.

Producer Danny Strong, acknowledged there was an inspiration for the show, but he did not mention Diddy. In fact, he described the show being "loosely" based off certain

elements of another hip-hop legend, Shawn "Jay-Z" Carter, who started off as a drug dealer before rapping.

Along with Diddy and Jay-Z, the show has been said to be about other popular artists - 50 cent and Frank Ocean.

Social media has chimed in

on the drama saying it would be far-fetched for any hip-hop artist to say the show is completely about them.

"That would be like admitting to murder and using illegal money to start off your business," said viewer Trinity Oaks.

Terrance Howard told Billboard magazine just before the show premiered on Jan. 7, "My hope is for viewers to see it and realize that even rich hip-hop stars have issues and struggles in their personal lives."

Despite the drama, "Empire" continues to take the world by storm with only three more episodes to go in season one, and a renewal for a second season from Fox. Catch up on the drama on Fox, Wednesdays at 7 p.m. CDT.

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Your best creative works to BeanSwitch magazine

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Deadline: midnight Friday, March 13

Sports

Skyhawks fall to Tennessee State in OVC title game 64-60

Jared Peckenpaugh

Sports Editor

Eventually, all great sports streaks come to an end. For the UTM women's basketball team, they saw their streak of four consecutive Ohio Valley Conference Tournament Championships come to an end at the hands of the No. 3 seed, Tennessee State.

The Skyhawks, who came into the championship game with a perfect 16-0 record and tournament wins over Eastern Illinois and Belmont, were searching for their fifth straight OVC championship and another birth to the NCAA tournament.

From the opening tip, Tennessee State showed momentum and confidence that they would be the team that would knock off a Skyhawk team who has looked near unstoppable in previous tournament trips. The Tigers took command of the lead and stretched it out to 12 points midway through the first half.

From there, UTM had to play catch-up and were successful, retaking the lead with under two minutes in the first half before Tennessee State rebounded and carried a 28-26 lead into the locker room at halftime.

Tennessee State came out firing again in the second half, but UTM was able to prevent TSU from extending their run into double digits again. The Skyhawks rebounded back and



Photo Credit/Sports Information

fought toe-to-toe with TSU, swapping the lead six times and tying the game seven times.

Both teams had opportunities to close the game in regulation, but were unable to get an advantage over their opponent. Tennessee State had a possession that spanned from the 2:35 mark to the :57 second mark in which the Lady Tigers were unable to convert on five shot attempts. The Skyhawks had two opportunities to take the lead, but turned the ball over on the first attempt and were

unable to get a shot off at the buzzer on the second attempt, sending the game into overtime tied at 53.

In the overtime period, Tennessee State and UTM battled it out until the 34 second mark when TSU guard Brianna Lawrence hit a 3-pointer that gave the Lady Tigers a four point lead. Even though Katie Schubert followed up with a 3-pointer to close the lead to one, UTM had to foul TSU, hoping they would miss one or both and give the ball back to

the Skyhawks. However, TSU hit both of their free-throws, got a defensive stop and hit one more free-throw to put the game out of reach.

Tennessee State players stormed the court as soon as the final buzzer sounded, sealing their 64-60 win over the top-seeded Skyhawks.

For the Lady Tigers, it is only their third OVC tournament title in program history and their first in 20 years.

After the game, UTM head coach Kevin McMillan had this

to say about the game and his team's performance.

"The game to me was decided in the first 10 minutes," said UTM head coach Kevin McMillan. "It looked like they wanted it a lot worse than we did. [Tennessee State] jumped out big on us, but I give our kids a lot of credit. They fought back and had a chance to win in the last 30 seconds."

Coming into the game, sophomore forward Ashia Jones notched a 30 point and 39 point outing in UTM's previous two tournament games. Jones led the Skyhawks in scoring, but only managed to score 23 points and was named a member of the OVC All-Tournament team. TSU was led by Brianna Lawrence (22 points), who was named OVC Tournament Most Valuable Player.

Overall, the Skyhawks converted 42 percent (19-45) of their shots and 33 percent (3-9) from 3-point range. Even though Tennessee State had lower percentages than the Skyhawks, the Lady Tigers had more opportunities shooting 24-59 (41 percent) from the field and shot 7-24 (29 percent) from 3-point range.

Even though the Skyhawks will not advance to the NCAA tournament, they will receive an automatic bid into the WNIT tournament. UTM will find out where they will be seeded on Monday, March 16, during the WNIT selection show.

Skyhawks drop OVC Tournament quarterfinal game to Eagles 76-65

Jared Peckenpaugh

Sports Editor

The UTM men's basketball saw their Ohio Valley Conference Tournament dreams dashed after they fell to the Morehead State Eagles 76-65 on Thursday Night.

In the only regular season meeting between the two schools, the Skyhawks picked up the 75-72 victory in overtime at the Elam Center. UTM had success offensively with four different Skyhawk players finishing with double-digit points while the Morehead State's leading scorer, senior guard Angelo Warner, finished with 15 points.

That wasn't the case for Warner tonight as he led his Eagle team with 27 points and eight rebounds. Morehead State also shot well as a team completing 51 percent (27-52) of their shots in the game.

The Skyhawks fought toe-to-toe with Morehead State in the opening minutes before the Eagles managed to put together a sizable run midway through the first half.



From there, Morehead State never looked back, eventually expanding their lead to 16 points. A few small runs helped trim the Eagles' lead to single-digits, but UTM could not muster enough of a run to catch up with and overtake the Eagles.

"My hat's off to Morehead, I thought they played really well," said UTM head coach Heath Schroyer. "We never were able to get into a rhythm, they sped us up and we just never were able to play in a flow that we needed to play in and be successful."

UTM struggled offensively, shooting only 37 percent (20-54) as a team and 36 percent

(9-25) from behind the arc. Morehead State also forced UTM to commit 16 turnovers, including 10 steals. Junior guard Alex Anderson led the Skyhawks with a career high 23 points and shot 6-9 from 3-point range.

After the game, Morehead State head coach Sean Woods had this to say about Coach Schroyer and the new-look Skyhawks.

"For his first year being in the OVC and really establishing a presence in his first year. They had a great year, they weren't very big but they were scrappy, and I thought he maximized everything that he had. They're going to be a team to recon with."

With the loss, the Skyhawks finish the season with an overall record of 18-12 and 10-7 in OVC play. However, the hopes of a postseason tournament like the CBI or CIT are still high for the Skyhawks.

"For these seniors and this program to be able to play in a postseason tournament would be a huge accomplishment," said Schroyer.

UPCOMING ATHLETIC EVENTS

Baseball

6 p.m. Friday, March 13 – Tennessee Tech
3 p.m. Saturday, March 14 – Tennessee Tech
1 p.m. Sunday, March 15 – Tennessee Tech
5 p.m. Tuesday, March 17 – Southern Illinois
3 p.m. Wednesday, March 18 – at Saint Louis
3 p.m. Friday, March 20 – at Southeast Missouri
2 p.m. Saturday, March 21 – at Southeast Missouri
1 p.m. Sunday, March 22 – at Southeast Missouri

Track

Friday, March 20 – Rhodes Open at Memphis, Tennessee

Equestrian

10 a.m. Friday, March 13 – South Dakota State
10 a.m. Saturday, March 14 – Sacred Heart

Golf

Bobby Nichols Intercollegiate
Sunday, March 15 – at Sevierville, Tennessee

Softball

1 p.m. Saturday, March 14 – at Southeast Missouri
3 p.m. Saturday, March 14 – at Southeast Missouri
1 p.m. Sunday, March 15 – at Southeast Missouri
3 p.m. Wednesday, March 18 – Evansville
5 p.m. Wednesday, March 18 – Evansville
1 p.m. Saturday, March 21 – at Jacksonville State
3 p.m. Saturday, March 21 – at Jacksonville State
Noon Sunday, March 22 – at Tennessee Tech
2 p.m. Sunday, March 22 – at Tennessee Tech